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A Golden Chain of Five Links

A HISTORICAL NOTICE OF MEN AND BOOKS.

(By the Rev. R. Shindler, in 'Light in the Home.')

The printed page has often supplied the place of the living messenger. It was by no preaching or preacher that the light of God shone into the mind and heart of Luther, but by the bible which he found in the monastery. And so, in tens of thousands of instances, the tract, the book, and especially the bible, has been the means of light and salvation to men and women of all ranks, who had not had the advantage, or had not availed themselves of the privilege, of the ministry of the gospel. In some cases we can trace successive links in a chain, of circumstances, or as we may say, causes and effects, by which men who have attained to great eminence and usefulness in the Church and in the world have been more or less directly benefited by means of printed books.

One such case has been often referred to, in which names and men no less distinguished than Dr. Sibbs, Richard Baxter, Dr. Doddridge, the great Wilberforce, and the excellent Legh Richmond, are linked in a beautiful chain. To trace the connection of these several links, and to show in a somewhat fuller detail how the good seed of the kingdom, disseminated in well-known books, has been the production of a succession of rich harvests is our purpose here.

We begin with the author of 'The Saints' Everlasting Rest,' the saintly and much-suffering Richard Baxter. This takes us back to the time of James the First. Richard Baxter was a son of a gentleman of the same name, residing at Eaton Constantine, about one mile from the famous Wrekin Hill, and five miles from Shrewsbury. At the time of young Richard's birth his mother was staying with her father at High Ercall, in the same county.

The elder Baxter had been recently awakened and converted by the private reading of Holy Scripture, without any preacher or teacher. Indeed, it seems that there was no preaching or teaching of any kind, except the reading of common prayer and the psalms and epistles. Many of the men who held benefices were unable to preach, and not a few were men of scandalous lives, and some were only less ignorant than their flocks.

The incumbent of Eaton Constantine held another living twenty miles away, but in neither did he ever preach. He was not equal to this duty, and he had lived through the reign of Elizabeth, who, it is well known, discouraged preaching except on special occasions. At eighty years of age, this good man, for such we may hope he was, became blind. He could repeat the usual prayers from memory, and for the reading of the psalms and lessons he engaged whom he could: one year it was a common laborer, and another it was a tailor.

The elder Richard Baxter became a very devout man, and took pains to read the Word of God—generally the historical portions—to his son, who was very fond of play and amusement, and though not generally wild in his habits, was addicted with other boys to visit in a clandestine way the neighboring orchards. Indeed, he consumed so much raw, and unripe fruit, especially apples, that he afterwards attributed his life-long trouble in his stomach to those early excesses.

His school days were spent at a public school in the village of Wroxeter, which occupies the site of the ancient Uriconium. When about fifteen years of age he was awakened to a sense of religion and of his sinful state by reading a book lent to him by the laborer who read the lessons in church, called 'Bunny's Resolutions.' It was not strictly speaking a book teaching the evangelical faith, and possibly was both legal and Romish in its tendencies; but it showed him the folly of sinning, the misery of the wicked, and the magnitude of eternal

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things, as well as the necessity of a holy life. However, this brought light to him in some things, produced a sense of his sinful character, and a seriousness of purpose to amend his ways.

'Yet whether,' says he, 'sincere conversion began now or before or after, I was never able to know, for I had before had some love to the things and people that were good, and a restraint from many sins. I knew that Christ was the only Mediator, by whom we must have pardon, justification and life, but I had very little sense of the love of God in Christ to the world, and to me, nor of my special need of Him.' But he adds further:—

'About this time it pleased God that a poor pedler came to the door who had ballads and some good books, and my father bought of him Dr. Sibbs's 'Bruised Reed.' This also I read, and found it suited my taste, and was seasonably sent me; which opened more the love of God to me, and gave me a livelier apprehension of the mystery of redemption, and how much I was beholden to Jesus Christ.'

The following sentence or two are worthy of special notice:—

'All this while neither my father nor I had any acquaintance or familiarity with any that had any understanding in matters of religion, or ever heard any pray extempore.

'After this we had a servant that had a little piece of Mr. Perkins's works—that on 'Repentence, and the Right Art of Living and Dying Well,' and 'The Government of the Tongue.' And the reading of that did further inform me and confirm me. And thus, without any means but books, God was pleased to resolve me for himself.'

The next link in this chain is that of the Rev. Philip Doddridge, D.D. His grandfather was the incumbent of Shepperton, near London, and his father was an oilman in that city. His mother was a daughter of the Rev. John Beaumann, of Prague, Bohemia, the city of Jerome's martyrdom. The Romish persecutions that followed the expulsion of the Elector Palatine Frederic compelled him to fly from his country, and after spending some time in Germany he came to England, and became the master of the free school at Kingston-on-Thames.

Philip was his mother's twentieth child, eighteen of whom died in infancy. Philip was laid aside as dead, but there was a tiny spark of life, which the careful nurse kindly nurtured. Of his mother's first lessons given to her feeble boy from the Dutch tiles of the fireplace, the reader has often heard. Doddridge owed something to Baxter, but not so much with reference to spiritual awakening or conversion as to subsequent edification. It was when he was a student under Dr. Jennings, at Daventry, and as a young pastor, that he derived the chief benefit from Baxter's writings, which, with Bishop Tillotson's works, were among his greatest literary treasures.

Doddridge's exposition, or rather paraphrase, on the New Testament, is a portly and useful set of books, but no work of his has been so widely acceptable and useful—excepting perhaps some of his hymns, such as 'Jesus, I love Thy charming name'—as his 'Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.' It has been translated into many languages, and has been instrumental in leading many to God, and to run for and obtain the heavenly prize.

Among many others the celebrated William Wilberfoce may be mentioned, as the next link in the chain. Wilberforce came into possession of riches while yet a young man. He was a member of several London clubs, and a man of the world. Club-life then—a century or more ago—was commonly associated with gaming and with free, if not fast, living, and fashionable life. Pleasure occupied much of his time. His first visit to the Continent was with the celebrated Mr. Pitt; the second time, in 1784, with Isaac Milner, a Cambridge Senior Wrangler, and afterwards Dean of Carlisle, and his mother and sister. His conversations with Milner did much to prepare him for that radical change of heart and life which soon took place. 'Milner appeared,' says Wilberforce, 'in all respects like a man of the world, mixing, like myself, in all companies; and joining as readily as others in the prevalent Sunday parties.'

But beneath this exterior powerful evangelical influences were at work, and to his great surprise Wilberforce, before they started, discovered this fact. 'Had I known at first,' says he, 'what his opinions were, it would have decided me against making him the offer. So true is it that a gracious hand leads us in ways that we know not, and blesses us, not only without, but against our plans and intentions.'

Just before starting Wilberforce had lighted on Dr. Doddridge's 'Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul,' and had asked Milner what he thought of the book. 'It is one of the best books ever written,' was his reply. 'Let us take it with us and read it on the

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journey.' They did read it, and one of the first results for Wilberforce was that he determined to examine the bible for himself on the momentous points to which the work of Doddridge relates. Another Continental journey was taken, to Switzerland and Italy, and they studied the Greek Testament together, discussing with each other the great truths which came before them.

For a time Wilberforce endeavored to keep up his usual manner in the company of the various people with whom he mixed, but his change in certain things began to attract attention, and beneath his apparent cheerfulness there were working thoughts and sentiments which greatly agitated him, and which deepened from day to day.

'As soon as I reflected seriously on these subjects,' he says, 'the deep guilt and black ingratitude of my past life forced themselves upon me in the strongest colors, and I condemned myself for having wasted my precious time and opportunities and talents. It was not so much the fear of punishment by which I was affected as a sense of my great sinfulness in having so long neglected the unspeakable mercies of my God and Saviour and such was the effect which this thought produced that for months I was in a state of the deepest depression from strong conviction of my guilt.'

But the good seed sprung up and bore fruit. Thus he concludes:—

'What infinite love that Christ should die for such a sinner! and how necessary is it that he should save us altogether, that we may appear before God with nothing of our own. God grant I may not deceive myself in thinking I feel the beginning of gospel comfort!'.

We come to one now nearer our own time, whose name has been familiar to us from our childhood as the author of 'The Dairyman's Daughter,' and other small works which have been greatly blessed to the conversion of souls in all parts of the world.

The Rev. Legh Richmond had a son named Wilberforce, and in his own account of his reasons for giving him this name, he says:

'But it was not the tie of ordinary friendship, nor the veneration which in common with multitudes I felt for the name of Wilberforce, which induced me to give that name to my child; there had for many years past subsisted a tie between myself and that much loved friend of a higher, and more sacred character than any other which earth can afford. I feel it to be a debt of gratitude, which I owe to God and to man, to take this affecting opportunity of stating that to the unsought and unexpected introduction of Mr. Wilberforce's book on 'Practical Christianity.' I owe, through God's mercy, the first sacred impression which I ever received as to the spiritual nature of the gospel system, the vital character of personal religion, the corruption of the human heart, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. A young minister, recently ordained, and just entrusted with the charge of two parishes in the Isle of Wight (Brading and Yaverland), I had commenced my labors too much in the spirit of the world, and founded my public instructions on the erroneous notions that prevailed among my academical and literary associates. The scriptural principles stated in the 'Practical View' convinced me of my error, led me to a study of the scriptures with an earnestness to which I had hitherto been a stranger, humbled my heart, and brought me to seek the love and blessing of that Saviour who alone can afford a peace which the world cannot give. Through the study of that book I was induced to study the writings of the British and Foreign reformers. I saw the coincidence of their doctrines and with those of the scriptures, and those which the Word of God taught me to be essential to the welfare of myself and my flock. I know too well what has passed within my heart, for now a long period of time, not to feel and confess that to this incident I was indebted originally for those solid views of Christianity on which I rest my hope for time and eternity. May I not, then, call the honored author of that book my spiritual father? and if my spiritual father, then my best earthly friend?'

If any argument were necessary to show the vast importance of a liberal and world-wide dissemination of Christian literature, this would supply it; and it should encourage all engaged in this work, and not least the great society which has done and is still doing so much in this glorious enterprise.

It should teach us, also, a sometimes needful lesson, not to neglect small efforts for doing good, nor omit to use every means for disseminating the truth which brings salvation to all who receive it in the love thereof. The apparently casual call of the pedler at the house of Mr. Baxter's father was the first link in a chain of events by which myriads of souls have been made eternally holy and happy.

The cause of temperance has nothing to hope, but much to fear from a license system.—Daniel Dorchester, D.D.

BOYS AND GIRLS

The Hue Of Resolution.

If John Abbott had a besetting fault it was his lack of determination. He was so slow in making up his mind regarding every subject that really it could scarcely be said that he made it up at all. Circumstances usually did it for him.

If he had a question to decide, a difficulty to meet, or an obstacle to overcome, he would wait around, doubting and hesitating until something occurred to close every avenue of escape from his difficulty but one, and then John would be obliged to take that road, whether it was the best that had been presented to his mental vision or not. This lack of resolution made of John rather a vacillating, invertebrate creature, a source of trial to his friends, and an annoyance to himself, for he was continually blocking his own pathway to success. Aunt Sally Hopkins said (and with some truth), that if John had a hill to climb, he'd wait round and procrastinate, to see if the hill wouldn't be levelled by the time he had to climb it.

But John had gone through school with some degree of success, and graduated well up in his class. He was particularly strong in arithmetic, and had a clear head for business—when once he applied himself to the question in hand. So he accepted a position with Mr. Gallup, the banker. If two situations had been open to him he might have been trying to decide yet; but, as it was, he walked out of school one day, and took up his work behind the wire screen in the bank-house the next.

And now he had a condition to face that could not be set aside or ignored for a moment. He had been with Mr. Gallup nearly a year, and had made himself of considerable value to the old banker. There was one thing about John — he was faithful. He was always in the banking-rooms on time in the morning. As soon as the clock on the church spire above the way pointed to five minutes of nine, John was sure to be just about turning the corner, or entering the side-door of the office. He was never late, though it was a good two miles' walk from his home on the outskirts of the town.

For some months he had been carefully hoarding his money, and one morning rode into the bank on the wheel he had purchased the day before from Sessions, the local bicycle agent. He was so delighted with his new possession that he could not help glancing at it every time he had occasion to go into the back office.

Before the morning was half over John saw Mr. Sessions come in. He was busy at the moment, and Mr. Gallup attended to him. The bicycle dealer had a deposit to make and while the banker verified the several items on the deposit slip, Mr. Sessions walked along to John.

WHERE DID YOU GET THIS?'

'How does she run, Johnny?' he asked.

'Finely,' declared John, with enthusiasm.

Just then Mr. Gallup uttered a sharp exclamation. 'See here, Mr. Sessions,' he said.

The bicycle man went back to his part of the counter. The old banker held a bank-note out towards him. 'Where did you get that?' he asked, and his voice trembled slightly.

'Eh? Isn't it good?' demanded Sessions.

'Yes, yes. It's all right. But I want to know where you got it?'

'I thought it was all right, Gallup,' said the other, with a laugh, 'I got it from your clerk.'

'From Abbott?'

'Yes.'

'When?'

'Last night.'

'Got it from Abbott—from John Abbott?' He spoke so strangely that Mr. Sessions was perplexed. 'What's the matter with you, Gallup?' he asked. 'Is there anything wrong with the bill?'

'Wait a moment,' said the banker, hastily, 'You are a cautious man, Sessions. I marked that note myself for a special purpose. See that red cross in the corner? Abbott, come here a moment.'

John came unsuspiciously. Mr. Gallup placed the bank-note before him. 'Mr. Sessions says you paid him this note,' said the banker.

John looked surprised, 'I can't swear to having paid him that particular note, sir,' he said. 'But I gave him a note for a like amount last night.'

'Where did you get it?' demanded Mr. Gallup, his tone a bit harsher.

'I—I—why, sir, I have been saving the money out of my salary all winter,' said John, in astonishment.

'No, no!' exclaimed the banker. 'Where did you get that identical note?'

'Oh! I took it from the safe, sir. I did not know it would displease you. There were several loose one hundred dollar bills there and my money was in notes of small denominations and in silver. I distributed it around in the various compartments for small notes and coin. I have often changed notes in that way before.'

'Ah!' exclaimed Mr. Gallup, and his face brightened visibly. 'Just step to the safe and bring me that package of loose notes—the one from which you took this.'

John obeyed. Mr. Gallup took them in his hands and looked at them sternly before counting them. 'There were seventeen hundred dollars in this pile yesterday morning. According to your reckoning there should be sixteen hundred now?'

'Why, yes, sir.'

Mr. Gallup ran the bills over hastily, Then he went over them carefully, with compressed lips and a portentous frown upon his brow. There were but fifteen!

'One hundred from seventeen does not leave fifteen, Abbott,' said the banker, while Sessions looked on in amazement. 'That bill lay on top of this pile yesterday morning. Do you see that red cross? I marked it myself, so I know it came from the pile. Where has the other hundred dollar note gone?'

John was very white about the mouth, but he held his head up, and looked at his employer unflinchingly. 'Why do you ask me that, sir?' he demanded.

'Hold on, Johnny,' interrupted Sessions. 'Let's all keep cool. This is a serious business.'

'And it shall be investigated thoroughly,' said the banker, quickly. 'You may return to your work, Abbott.' Another customer had just entered. 'Keep this business to yourself, please, Sessions,' whispered Mr. Gallup.

'Of course. But I'll risk my own reputation on Johnny Abbot's honesty. Why, I've known him since he was a boy in kilts.'

'I do not accuse him,' declared the banker. 'But a hundred dollar note has been lost, and that particular one surely came from the package.'

Sessions examined the private mark again curiously. 'It's rather faint,' he said, 'but it's red ink all right. Doesn't anybody besides you and John have the run of the office?'

'Not when the safe is open. The janitor is never here until we get through for the

day. The only other person who comes in here is my son Paul,' added Mr. Gallup.

'Humph,' muttered Sessions, as he turned away. He took the opportunity before going out of speaking an encouraging word to John. 'Keep a stiff upper lip, Johnny,' he told him. 'It'll come out all right. By the way, have you seen Paul lately?'

'Paul Gallup?'

'Yes.'

'He was in a minute at lunch-time, yesterday.'

'Well, if he comes in to-day,' said the bicycle man, carelessly, 'tell him I want to see him. I want to try and sell him a wheel like yours.'

But John Abbott had something besides bicycles to think of. Nothing turned up to explain the disappearance of the extra hundred dollar note. Mr. Gallup examined the books thoroughly, but could find no account of the sum.

'And what is more, Abbott,' he said sternly, 'this is not the first money I have missed within the past few months. The other sums have been small, but this is too large a matter to overlook. Mind, I do not accuse you of taking the money. I have no evidence that would be accepted in any court. However, as far as I can see, the matter lies between you and me, as we are the only individuals who have access to the safe. If you wish you may resign, and the matter shall go no further unless other evidence turns up. Or you can remain until I can decide what action to take in the matter.

For once John Abbott had to face an issue which must be decided immediately. There was no chance for indecision or hesitancy. What he did in the face of these circumstances might color his whole future career. The doubt and perplexity in his countenance gave place to the hue of resolution. He looked his employer in the eye and squared his shoulders unconsciously.

'I'll stay and see it out,' he said. 'You must take the responsibility of discharging me if you want me to go.'

But in spite of his brave front, the next two days were the hardest of John's whole life. The burden of suspicion weighed upon him heavily. He had kept the knowledge of his trouble from the folks at home, and the only earthly person to whom he could looked for sympathy was Sissions. The latter was in the bank the third day after the discovery of the loss of the bank-note.

'What's become of Paul?' he asked, while the young clerk was cashing a cheque for him for a week.

'He hasn't been in here since you said you wanted to see him,' replied John. 'What denominations did you say?'

'Tens and fives. By the way, I hear he's taking up a good deal with young Kelly at the hotel. Gallup had better look up his boy's associates,' said Sessions, shrewdly.

'Here comes Kelly now,' said John, nodding to a young fellow who was just entering the bank. He was rather a loudly dressed youth, with an incipient moustache and not much in his face to recommend him, but he was popular with certain young men in the village. His father owned the hotel, and it was whispered that Kelly was teaching the village youth several things that it would have been much better they did not know.

Seeing that John was engaged, the hotel-keeper's son stepped up to Mr. Gallup.

'Will you give me smaller bills for this?' he asked.

'Certainly,' responded the banker, and swept the bank-note toward him. Suddenly he seized the bill eagerly and scrutinized it with the closest attention. 'Where did you get this?' he cried.

John and Sessions, attracted by his tone, hurried forward.

'See that!' exclaimed the banker triumphantly, 'The red cross in the corner! Where did you get it, sir?'

Young Kelly backed away, and looked perplexed. 'What's the game?' he asked. 'Isn't it good?'

'Of course it's good,' returned Mr. Gallup.

'Hold on, Gallup,' said the bicycle man, 'Be sure it's your mark this time.'

'I'm positive.'

'So you were before.'

'But see how strong the ink is. It was light in the other. See, it goes clear through the paper.'

He brought out the first bill and compared them.

'But you didn't mark but one,' said Sessions.

'It printed through on to the second bill,' declared the banker, confidently. 'The marks match exactly. These are the two bills I missed from the package. Abbott gave you one, Sessions, Now, where did you get this note, Kelly?'

'Oh, it's all right,' said the youth, carelessly. 'I thought I'd run up against a game of some kind. Your boy, Paul, gave me that bill.'

For an instant there was silence in the room. Then the banker asked, quietly:

'What for?'

'Just for a little bill he owed me.'

Mr. Gallup pushed the package of small notes toward him without a word, and Kelly went out. John went back to his window and completed his transaction with the bicycle dealer. In a few minutes Mr. Gallup came along with his hat and coat on.

'Abbott,' he said, in his usual metallic tone, 'I am glad to say you are exonerated. I am going out for a while. I shall be back after lunch.'

And that is all the apology he made for the suspicions he had had regarding John's honesty. But the young clerk saw the tears in his employer's eyes and understood; he heartily pitied the stricken father, and the son who had so disgraced him.

Aunt Mary's Story.

(By Ruby Lynn in 'Sunday Friend.')

CHAPTER I.

'Do tell us a story, Aunt Mary,' cried one of my little nieces, as tired and hot from an exciting game of tennis, they flung themselves down by my garden chair.

You have heard most of my stories.'

'Tell us about when you were a little girl, we like true stories so much,' exclaimed Helen.

Helen, aged ten, and Violet, a year younger, were spending their midsummer holidays with me. And whenever they were tired of play, or a wet day kept them within doors, their cry was, 'Tell us a story.'

'There is one I have never told you, because it makes my heart ache to speak of it; but this morning, when I overheard two little girls quarelling, and calling each other hard names, I thought, next time they come to me for a story, I will tell them how the greatest unhappiness of my life was caused by an act of selfishness.'

Violet drew closer to me, and hot-tempered, but tender-hearted Helen thrust a hand into mine. And so under the lime trees, one golden August evening, my story was told.

* * * * * *

Twenty years ago, children, I was a little girl of ten, and your Uncle Willie a small delicate boy of eight, We were the only ones at home, your mother and Uncle Philip were at boarding-schools.

A governess came every day to teach us for a few hours. Miss Parsons was very kind and patient, Willie seldom gave her trouble, but I often did.

I should be sent to school, my mother frequently remarked, if it were not for Willie. He had been delicate from his birth, and was allowed to do but few lessons. And I did not get through much work, as when Willie wanted me to play with him, I was always set free to do so.

Miss Parsons came at ten o'clock each morning, leaving us a few easy lessons to prepare for the next day.

Sometimes I had a lazy fit and dawdled over these little tasks almost all the afternoon, when, if I had but given my attention to them I could have learned them in a very short time.

One afternoon in June I had taken from three o'clock until five, committing to memory two verses of a little poem. Ever so many times, Willie (who had finished his small amount of work long since) ran in and out to ask if I had finished yet, each time I crossly told him 'No!'

Nurse came up with the tea-things, as I was putting the books away. I remember she scolded me for spilling some ink on the floor.

As soon as tea was over, we seized our hats and ran out to the garden. We had our own little plots of ground, and at the back of them was a strip of earth, about two yards wide, that we called 'the beach.' Our dear mother had the soil removed to a considerable depth, and the trench filled with sea-sand, in which were hidden pretty stones, and all kinds of shells.

'Shall we dig?' asked Willie.

'Too hot!' I decided.

'Shall we sail our boats in the pond?'

'No! I may make my dress dirty.'

I must tell you I was wearing a new pink print, adorned with loops of crimson ribbon.

'Run in and put on your old one;' suggested Willie.

'I shan't,' I made answer, 'Aunt Violet is coming this evening, and mother said if I were careful I might keep this one for her to see.'

'I do hope Aunt Violet will ask us to go to Rylands on Saturday; don't you, Mollie?' said Willie.

We both loved going to the farm; Grannie was so sweet, Uncle Tom so full of fun, and Aunt Violet thought of such delightful things for us to do.

'You might as well put your old dress on, Mollie, Aunt Violet can see this one another time'; grumbled Willie, but he found it was useless trying to persuade me, so set himself to think of a game that would not hurt my dress.

'Why, I know,' he cried, 'how funny we did not think of it before; we will ride Peter.'

Peter was our donkey, a dear little black fellow. He lived in the paddock fronting the stables, and was our especial property, a gift from kind Uncle Fred of Rylands.

'I don't think that can hurt my dress,' I said. So Willie fetched the donkey.

Peter was possessed of a very sweet temper, so we could saddle and bridle him with perfect ease.

For some time all went well, and we played quite happily until a dispute arose. Willie said it was his turn to ride, I said it was mine.

Willie, who could assert himself, when he felt unjustly wronged, seized the bridle. I struck Peter sharply three or four times with the stick I was carrying, and the poor little beast tried to move on. I knew Willie would not see Peter ill-treated, and as I expected, he let go the bridle, but he seized the skirt of my dress, crying, 'Come off, Mollie!'

He was pulling hard at my dress, and all at once I heard an ominous cracking, like stitches giving way. Passionate tempered I raised the stick I was carrying, and brought it down heavily across my little brother's outstretched hand.

'You've torn my dress, you horrid boy!' I cried, for when I jumped from the saddle, one side of my frock hung much lower than the other, and the loops of ribbon were all unfastened.

Willie made no answer, He flung himself down on the grass, and buried his face in his hands. I scarcely gave him a look, and rushed indoors and upstairs to nurse.

'Willie's torn my new dress,' I cried, bursting headlong into the room where she sat quietly sewing, 'I want you to mend it.'

'Come here and let me see. Oh! it's only plucked out from the gathers a little way, but it must have been a hard pull. How came Master Willie to do it?"

'He was trying to get me off the donkey.'

'Then you must have done something to provoke him, I'm certain. What a child you are, Miss Mollie, that nasty, teasing temper of yours will get you into sad trouble some day, I'm afraid.'

Nurse shook her head; I tossed mine and stamped my foot.

'Be quick, Nurse, Aunt Violet is here, I can hear her talking in the hall.'

The dress was speedily finished, and I hurried downstairs.

CHAPTER II.

'Well, my little woman,' cried Aunt Violet, as I ran gladly to her side, 'how smart you are this evening!'

Mother laughed, 'Mollie is a vain little girl, she teased me to let her keep that dress on simply to show it to you.'

Aunt Violet was stroking my long hair. 'I must have you and Willie to spend Saturday till Monday at Rylands Let me see, what is to-morrow? Friday. I am coming in the evening with some strawberries, I might just as well take you back with me. May I, Laura?' she ended, turning to my mother.

'Certainly, dear, but Mollie must get her lessons prepared for Monday.'

I readily promised that, then I pulled Aunt Violet's head to a level with my mouth, and whispered, 'Will you have me alone this time, please? Do say yes,'

'Why, have you and Willie quarrelled? Well, yes, if you like!'

'Please tell mother you would rather have me alone this time,' I whispered.

'I think I will have Mollie this week, and Willie the week after,' said Aunt Violet.

Mother looked a little surprised, but she had not caught the meaning of my whisper, and supposed it to be Aunt Violet's own wish, so she simply answered, 'Just as you like, Violet.'

Willie did not come in, much to my relief, and soon after Aunt Violet drove away.

My lessons next morning went all wrong. It was true I repeated the verses of poetry without one mistake, but my French exercise was perfectly disgraceful; Miss Parsons said, it must be re-written, and I must prepare the next one for Monday.

'Remember, Mollie, you are to get your lessons ready for Monday:' my mother remarked, as we rose from the dinner table.

Very sullkily I went upstairs, and dragged out the books; Willie followed, to see what I was going to do.

'Oh! Mollie, don't write those stupid exercises now; it's so jolly out of doors.'

'I must do my lessons now, because I am going to Rylands this evening to stay till Monday.'

'Oh! has Aunt Violet asked us,' cried Willie, gleefully. 'Why didn't you tell me before, Mollie? I had better learn my spelling and things.'

'You need not; Aunt Violet said at first she would have us both, but I wanted to go by myself this time, and she said I might.'

I looked up as I spoke; what a change came over my little brother's sweet face. All the happiness faded from it.

'Did you ask Aunt Violet not to have me, Mollie?'

'Of course I did, you tore my dress last night, and I was angry, I shall enjoy it better without you.'

Cruel words! A quiver passed over his sensitive face. A book he had been balancing on his finger-tips fell, and blotted the exercise I was writing.

'Oh! I am sorry,' he cried.

'You are not, I am sure you did it on purpose. Go away, I hate you, I wish I might never see you again!'

Willie went from the room sobbing as if his heart would break; and I set to work again. After all, very little harm was done.

How many times afterwards I wished I had called my little brother back and kissed away his tears.

We had finished tea, Willie and I, and were in the garden, when father passed us on his way to the house.

'So you are going to Rylands, little ones!'

'I'm not, Dad,' Willie answered.

'What! Has Aunt Violet left you out? That's too bad! Never mind, Willie, you shall go for a drive with me, I have to go a round this evening. We'll have Starlight, then you can drive!'

Willie's face rippled over with smiles. He was so pleased with the prospect of the drive. He always said he would be a doctor when he grew up, and help father with his work.

Aunt Violet came for me about eight o'clock. What a pleasant drive it was through the quiet country lanes, between hedgerows studded with sweet wild roses. I wish it could have lasted longer.

However, the dining-room at the farm looked very inviting that evening. The two big western windows were letting in the last glorious light of the sinking sun. Grannie was sitting by one of them, her knitting as usual in her hands.

'Well, my treasure,' she said, as I gently kissed her dear old cheek, 'how fast you grow, Mollie!'

'Let us hope she will grow wiser, as well as longer and broader,' said a cheery voice, and Uncle Tom lifted me from the ground.

'What a weight!' he groaned, 'it seems only the other day I could carry you on my shoulder.

'Where is Willie?' was his next remark.

'I am going to have Willie next time,' remarked Aunt Violet.

When Aunt Violet said, 'I am going to have Willie next time,' Uncle Tom gave a low whistle.

'How is that, Vi? I thought the children liked to be together?'

'I asked them both as usual, but Mollie begged me to let her come alone this time.'

'I think Mollie is rather inclined to be selfish,' said Uncle Tom, gravely.

I grew very red, and I well remember kind Aunt Violet took me to her room and kissed away the tears that had brimmed into my eyes. I thought if she knew all, she would think Uncle Tom was right.

Try as I might I could not feel really at ease all that evening, I kept wondering what Willie was doing, and if he minded very much.

Long after Aunt Violet had seen me safely into bed, I tossed uneasily from side to side, And when at length I managed to fall asleep, I had a most dreadful dream.

I thought Willie was running after me, when all at once he changed into a bull, with long sharp horns, and I could not move.

I woke with a wild shriek, and Aunt Violet, who slept in an adjoining room, came running in.

'What is the matter, Mollie?'

I clung to her, sobbing wildly, and imploring her not to leave me. She took me into her room, and popped me into her bed.

'I ought not to have let you eat cucumber for supper,' she said.

I knew it was not the cucumber that had caused my troubled sleep, but an uneasy conscience. However when the bright morning sunshine streamed into the room, I was as ready as anyone to make fun of the fears of the night.

I can't remember exactly what I did with myself all that delightful summer's morning, but in the afternoon, Aunt Violet asked me if I would like to have tea in the hay-field. Of course I said, 'Oh! how lovely!' And Aunt Violet sent me down to the Rectory with a note, asking Mrs. Lamb if her two little girls might return with me.

Flora and Gladys were twins, just my own age, and we were fast friends.

Mrs. Lamb said 'Yes,' and we were soon riding to the hay-field in one of the large waggons.

What fun we had to be sure, rolling each other about in the sweet-scented hay, and how good the tea tasted!

All at once I caught sight of a man on horseback, turning in at the field gate-way; and although at the first glance I did not recognize the rider, I felt sure that something had happened to spoil our pleasure.

CHAPTER III.

'What are you staring at, Mollie?' said Aunt Violet, 'your eyes look quite wild.'

'It is Benson, on "Goodbye," Auntie. Do you think there is anything the matter at home?' 'Good-bye,' was my father's fastest horse.

Benson was trotting up to us, as I spoke. He had a letter in his hand.

To this day I can see it, as plainly as I did then. The man's anxious face, the heated horse, with its excited eyes, distended nostrils, and foaming lips; the haymakers pausing in their work to watch us; and over all the bright evening sunshine.

'Anything wrong at Whetwick, Benson?' Uncle Tom asked.

'Master Willie's met with a h'accident, sir.'

'Oh, Benson!' I screamed, 'he's not killed, is he? Do say he's not killed!'

I remember Aunt Violet hushed me gently, and Uncle Tom asked Benson to go to the house and wait a few minutes. Then Flora and Gladys said 'Good-bye,' in a frightened way, and I watched them walk soberly across the field.

We went back to the farm-house, and Aunt Violet ordered the dog-cart. She told me mother wanted me back directly, because Willie kept asking to see me. He had fallen from a ladder and hurt his back.

When we reached Whetwick, Mother was at the door, watching for us. I heard her tell Aunt Violet that Willie was very seriously injured, and that even if he lived, he would be a cripple.

I began to cry loudly, and mother told me I must be brave and dry my tears, because Willie wanted so much to see me. And I must be very quiet, and not excite him at all

I shall never forget the terrible feeling that came over me when I followed my mother into Willie's room; I felt afraid to lift my eyes to the bed.

'Mollie, dear Mollie,' said my little brother's clear voice.

I looked up quickly at that, and saw Willie looking very much as usual, perhaps a trifle paler, surely he could not be as ill as they said.

I went close to him, and he put one of his thin little hands in mine.

'Wasn't I a silly to tumble off the ladder, but it wasn't quite all my fault, because it turned with me. It was against the big pear tree, and I thought I should be so brave if I went right up, and you would never call me a coward again, Mollie. I did hurt my head when I fell.'

Alas! poor boy, the injury to his head was slight. His spine had suffered most, but he did not know that for many a long day.

'Tell me all you did at Rylands, Mollie,' he whispered. 'I was so lonely without you. Oh! don't cry, Mollie, please, please, don't.'

Father came and led me away. 'It is time you had your medicine, Willie. Yes! you shall see Mollie early to-morrow morning.'

Willie did not die, although for a time the doctors thought he would. For years he could not walk at all, and was as helpless as a baby. Peter used to draw him about in an invalid carriage.

Now, children, you will understand why I often feel sad when I look at your dear Uncle Willie. I am thinking at such times, that if a little girl had not been very selfish long ago, a young man would not have been obliged to look on at football, cricket, and other field sports, but might have taken an active part in them. Why, I declare, there is Uncle Willie coming to look for us. Put your handkerchiefs away Violet and Helen, and jump up. He will be very angry if he discovers that I have told you this story, because he will never let me say it is my fault he is lame. But I shall always think so.

The Spoiled Dinner.

It was Monday morning, and Mr. Taylor, a town missionary in B——, was paying the first visit of the week at the house of Mrs. Clayton. This was an official arrangement, for the lady was an influential member of his committee, with time to devote to consultation over his most perplexing cases, and in Mrs. Clayton's quiet room, where wealth and culture stood as handmaids in the presence of the King, Mr. Taylor had found some of his greatest difficulties smoothed by her strong faith and substantial help.

To-day they had discussed business details and had knelt in prayer for blessing on the work; the gifts for some of his neediest cases, of which the missionary was her almoner, had been received, and he was leaving the room, when Mrs. Clayton recalled him: 'One moment more, Mr. Taylor; I had nearly forgotten a little matter I wished to name to you. I have one charity that I am specially anxious to administer well, because it is rather more valuable than the rest. I have for some years allowed £1 a month to six carefully selected cases of respectable poverty, and, where possible, of sincere Christianity—persons who have seen better days, and have never paraded their need. On Saturday I heard of the death of one of these protégés, so I have a vacancy and thought you might help me. Do you know anyone suitable? Or, if it were a nice old couple, whom you could confidently recommend, I should prefer that.'

'Five shillings a week,' Mr. Taylor said, 'that would be wealth to some of my poor people; but just now I do not think of any who quite meet all the conditions. There are the Stantons,' he added, musingly, 'they would be the very people, only they are not poor enough. I do not know their source of income,' he went on, 'but it must be a fairly substantial one, they are so eminently respectable, and the brightest Christians I know. It is one of my treats to go and sit in their cosy room when I am weary and dispirited with my work—just like a breeze from the delectable mountains.'

'You make me wish to know them,' said Mrs. Clayton; we all need that kind of air sometimes. If you will give me their address I will find them out some day, but they are evidently not the people for my present purpose. Well, you may perhaps think of someone in the course of the next day or two. I should like it to be amongst your poor friends if possible. Good morning.'

And Mr. Taylor took his departure, indulging, as he walked along, in a most comfortable habit of soul that had often been of marvellous service in his work. He turned, simply and believingly, to the Friend whom he knew to be 'with him alway,' and asked him to guide in a matter which might so bless some tried and suffering saint.

He visited many homes that morning, some poor enough indeed, but not respectable; many where the elements of comfort were present in ample work and good wages, but neutralized by thriftlessness, and, alas! too often by sin; but in none did he find a suitable case for Mrs. Clayton's charity. And all through his morning round his thoughts turned, with steady and unaccountable persistency, to the little home of the Stantons, their bright, cheery faces haunted him as in a vision. 'What can it mean?' he wondered; 'can one of them be ill? I am going in quite another direction this afternoon, or I would have dropped in and inquired.'

His afternoon work was mapped out in his usual methodical way, but he went in to his mid-day meal with a perplexed face. 'Has there been any message from the Stantons?' he asked of his wife, rather eagerly. 'No, but you are wanted to go to Howard street; there's a message from No. 15—a child ill, I think,' Mrs. Taylor said.

'Why, that is only two doors from the Stantons', just at the opposite end of the town from where I intended to be this afternoon; so I will look in on them at the same time and satisfy myself. I can't but think there is some trouble there.'

He had a sympathetic listener in his good wife, who knew the old couple well and quite shared in his admiration of them; but, of course, she could throw no light on his feelings of perplexity.

An hour afterwards he knocked at the door of No. 17 Howard street, a two-roomed flat on the sunny side of the street, and it was opened by an ideal old woman, who dropped an old-fashioned curtsey at the sight of her visitor. 'Why, Mr. Taylor, who would have thought of seeing you here to-day? My husband and I were reckoning that you would not be coming our way for a week at least; but come in do, you're kindly welcome.'

She led the way into the spotlessly clean room, where the sunshine, which was just then dancing into every corner, could find no speck nor stain on the carefully kept furniture. The old man was sitting by a tiny fire, looking more feeble than usual and not nearly so cheerful, and Mr. Taylor's sharpened vision noticed how threadbare his clothes were, and how they hung more loosely than was their wont on his shrunken limbs.

There were no complaints in reply to Mr. Taylor's inquiries concerning his health; he was 'fairly well,' he said, but somehow there was not the usual flow of pleasant, joyous talk, and the missionary, to overcome the feeling of depression, proposed reading a chapter in their well-worn Bible, and turned to Romans viii. The old woman sat near her husband, and they both followed the beautiful words with an expression of devout reverence until the 28th verse was reached, and then William Stanton suddenly leaned forward and laid his hand on the reader's knee.

'Excuse me, sir, but I can't help interrupting you—isn't it desperate hard to think that's always true?' Mr. Taylor looked in surprise at the fine old face which was working with emotion, but before he could speak the trembling voice continued, 'It seems such a little thing to be so troubled about, and I'm real 'shamed to let it get such a hold of me, for after all it's only that our little bit of dinner was spoiled to-day. Nay, Betty, don't shake your head, honey, it will be a relief to me to tell Mr. Taylor all about it.'

'You see, sir,' he continued, 'it's this way. When I got past work, I sunk my savings in an annuity, but it was so small that my wife and I have a hard struggle to live on it. We've known better days, and have our little bits of things that we could never make up our minds to part with. We've never wanted anyone to know how pinched we were, and my old girl isn't over well pleased, I am afraid, at my telling you now, but it's a relief. If it hadn't been for the food we could have managed first rate, but that's been the difficulty; it isn't once in many weeks that we taste butcher's meat, and tea and bread aren't very satisfying. But it's my birthday to-day, and Betty had set her heart on our having a good dinner, and she got a few potatoes and a bit of dripping, and she does know how to cook when she has got the stuff, does Betty! She had mashed the potatoes and seasoned them, and they were frying over the fire, and I was watching them while she set the table, and they were getting quite brown and smelling so tasty, and just as she was crossing the kitchen to lift the pan from the fire, a great cloud of soot came down the chimney and spoiled it all!'

Poor old Willy paused at this tragic point in his narrative, and looked piteously at his listeners. 'Now, sir, I do want you to understand that it's not the loss of the dinner that troubles me so much, but the terrible doubt of our Father's love. Can you think it looks like his caring for us to let this happen?'

'Yes, dear friend, I can indeed!' exclaimed the missionary, whose eyes were brimming with thankful tears, 'and so will you when you hear what I have to tell. You will understand that the soot which has tried your faith so much was only the black plumage in God's raven of deliverance.'

* * * * * * *

It was characteristic of human nature, however sanctified, that amidst the overwhelming gratitude with which the dear old couple listened to Mr. Taylor's story there mingled in Willy's mind a masculine note of triumph over Betty, that he had been in the right in divulging that home secret after all!.—M. C. F. in the 'Christian.'

It is estimated that nine hundred millions are spent for liquors annually in the United States. The entire mineral product of 1896, including gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, zinc, quicksilver and aluminum, was about $255,000,000. That is to say, more than three and a-half times as much is spent for drink as the value of all the metals from our mines. The amount spent for liquor is more than four times the value of all the bituminous and anthracite coal produced annually.—'Christian Work.'

A Successful Experiment.

It is sad to know that a part of the human race lies down at night hungry.

Yet it seems still sadder that there are constantly around us, in our homes, perhaps, hearts which are starving for a little appreciation.

Just what put the idea into her head Mildred never quite knew. It was certain that when she came down stairs on this particular morning, she had resolved that through the day she would say every appreciative word she could honestly utter.

'How nice these muffins are!' she exclaimed at the breakfast table as soon as the meal was fairly begun. Mrs. Marsh looked surprised. She had been dreading comment on the coffee, which was not as clear as usual that morning. The family tasted the muffins critically.

'Light as a feather,' declared Mr. Marsh. 'Mother's muffins are always good,' said Jack. And then the conversation at the breakfast table went on most pleasantly, and no one thought to grumble.

Bridget was scrubbing the front steps when Mildred put on her things to go to school. 'You did up my lace collar beautifully,' the young girl said, pausing at the door. 'I believe it looks better than when it was sent to the laundry.'

'That's a good thing, sure,' answered Bridget, smiling. And then, for some reason, she went back and scrubbed a corner of the upper step which she had passed over earlier.

'That explanation of yours helped me to see into the seventh example perfectly,' Mildred said, lingering after the class in algebra had been dismissed. 'Thank you.'

The pale teacher looked up and smiled. She had a sudden refreshed, rested feeling.

After school Mildred went into the shoe store for a pair of rubbers. 'My last ones wore spendidly, Mr. Grott,' she said, as she stood waiting for her change. And the angular Mr. Grote actually tipped over a pile of shoe-boxes in his astonishment. He was used to complaint, but appreciation of his really excellent goods was so unusual that he felt fairly embarrassed. After Mildred had gone, he found himself whisting a gay melody he had known in his boyhood, and the suggestion of a smile lingered about his thin lips.

These were little things, but one girl at least, thought the experiment worth repeating indefinitely.—'Bible Student.'

Only a Mite Box.

It is only a mite box, yet handle with care;
Weave round it a setting of faith and of prayer;
Then cast in thy offering, though small it may be;
If pure is thy motive, thy Saviour will see.

'Tis only a mite box, not much will it hold—
Some pennies and nickels, but not often gold;
Yet Jesus will add his own blessing, I know,
As forth on its mission of love it shall go.

Though only a mite box, a power it shall be
In scattering the leaves of the world-healing tree;
And oh! what a song at the harvest we'll sing
With those who are singing to-day with our King.

Then guard well the mite box, and gather with prayer
The crumbs that lie scattered about here and there;
Like stars they will shine in thy crown by and by;
When thou shalt have entered thy home in the sky.

—H. M. Echo.

Correspondence

Hantsport, N.S.

Dear Editor,—We live by the Avon River, on a little hill. They have made a Government wharf here lately. They have a new pipe organ here in the Baptist Church.

ALMA P. (aged 13).

East Wentworth, N.S.

Dear Editor,—My father keeps the post-office. We live near the Cobequid Mountains. We are five miles from the railway station at Wentworth. We have a very pretty school house and a nice school ground. We have a good teacher, and her name is Miss Henderson.

GEORGE (aged 11).

Oakland, Ont.

Dear Editor,—We have a library in our day school, and I have read four books out of it.

ROY (aged 9).

Ayr.

Dear Editor,—I have a little kitten named Tiny; it is very fat; it does not catch any mice. Ma says I feed it too much. I have read many books, and the best one I read is 'Uncle Jack, the Fault Killer.' It tells about him curing four faults.

BERTHA (aged 11).

Minnedosa, Man.

Dear Editor,—I have a few hens and a cat for pets. We only have half-a-mile to go to school, and my brother makes the fire for a month. I am learning to play a little on our organ now.

JEAN (aged 7).

Woodstock, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I live in the pretty town of Woodstock, and I am a great friend of the 'Messenger.' Mother has taken it for a great many years. I have no brothers or sisters. I have a cat named Buttons. It is very fond of music. It will come up to the person that is playing and try to lick their face, and then it will curl down on their knee and purr till the music stops, and then it jumps down. I attended my cousin's wedding in September, and had a very enjoyable time. It was a beautiful afternoon, and there were thirty-seven guests. My Sunday-school teacher's name is Miss Gardner, and we all like her very much.

MARGARET N. H.

Waubaushene.

Dear Editor,—I take the 'Dew Drops,' but the larger girls take the 'Messenger,' and I often read it, and like it very much. I go to Toronto every summer during the holidays, and enjoy my visit, but I am always anxious to get home again.

FLORENCE J,

Northport.

Dear Editor,—My sister takes the 'Northern Messenger,' and I look for its coming like a dear little friend. I like to read Little Folks' Page best. I enjoy reading the Sabbath School lessons. I go to school every day; I attend Sabbath-school also. Wishing you a happy year,

JIMMY (aged 10).

Loch Lomond, Cape Breton, N.S.

Dear Editor,—I am going to write you another letter to let you know that I have come back from Scotland, and my little friend J. A., from Teeswater, will see that I have taken notice of her letter in the 'Messenger' of Dec. 16. I came back to Halifax from Liverpool on the 'Parisian' three weeks ago. I liked my visit to Scotland very much. I spent most of the time in Edinburgh and Glasgow. I went to see Holyrood Palace and John Knox's house. I liked to see the relics of Queen Mary, but they are crumbling away to dust, and it is getting hard to keep them together. There are so many pretty places round Edinburgh, it would take too long to tell about it. I went to see Cramond, and I was up Calton Hill; I also saw Arthur's seat. I think Edinburgh must be the prettiest place in the world, the surroundings are so fine. I used to like to go to the churches, the music was so grand, especially St. Giles. When I got home I found my pets all right.

JANE CATHERINE.

Keady.

Dear Editor,—I have just about half-a-mile to go to school. I go to Sunday-school; my teacher's name is Miss Duncan.

LIZZIE (aged 9).

Beaver Knoll Cottage,
Edna, Alta.

Dear Editor,—We have two old pigs and seven little ones. We have three sheep; their names are Nanny, Janny and Bobity. I can ride a horse and hitch a team as well as a man. We have four horses and a colt.

JULIA (aged 11).

Salmon River.

Dear Editor,—I have four brothers and two sisters. Papa and my two oldest brothers are in the lumber woods. We see them *every Saturday night. We live a short distance* from Salmon River, as we can see the lumber going down in the spring. I have a little sister two years old. She goes a little piece to meet me when I am coming from school. She has two little pets, a dog and a cat. We don't have any school in winter. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

GUSSIE S.

Middleton, P.E.I.

Dear Editor,—I always like to read the letters in the 'Messenger,' and I thought I would write one too. I live in the country, and my papa is a farmer. We have twelve cows and three horses, and a lot of pigs and sheep, and it keeps papa and the man pretty busy to do all the work. I have two brothers, Vernon and Erle. Vernon and I are in the fourth reader, and Erle is in the second primer. I do not go to school, as I have a lame knee, and it hurts me to walk, but mamma teaches me at home, as she was a school teacher. Before Christmas Erle wrote to Santa Claus for a lot of presents for us all, but I am afraid he will not be able to read his letter; Erle thinks he will. I guess somebody will be able to make it out.

SADIE B. C. (aged 10).

Belknap, Mich.

Dear Editor,—I have never seen any letters in the 'Messenger' from out here. We live two miles from Lake Michigan. I often go to the pier in summer-time and see the men loading the boats with fruits to take to Chicago. I was visiting in Canada about a month, but I like home best.

RUSSEL B. K.

Glen Sutton.

Dear Editor,—The schoolhouse is in our door-yard. I have a good school teacher, and I like her very much.

DON (aged 10).

Maine, N.Y.

Dear Editor,—We have two cats and a cow. I have two brothers and one sister. Our church is being repaired.

ROSE (aged 8).

Cedar Cliff, Mount Pleasant,
St. John, N.B.

Dear Editor,—I made-up a little piece the other morning, and thought I would send it to you. It is about Christmas.

The children hang their stockings,
Beside the fire so bright;
Then go to bed and sleep
Through the long and dreary night.

Then jump up bright and early,
And down to the fire so dim,
To see what old St. Nicholas
Has brought for her or him.

And empty each little stocking
In such a hurry and noise—
And all the little children
Got lots and lots of toys.

Then up to mother and father
To show what they have got;
And say, well, now I rather
Think we have got a lot!

GORDON.

Derby, N.W.T.

Dear Editor,—I go to school in summer, and to Sunday-school every Sunday. The Sunday-school is held in the schoolhouse, half-a-mile from here. I live on a farm seven miles from town. I have a pet dog named Dash.

JOHN (aged 12).

Spider Mothers.

(Julia MacNair Wright in 'Child's Paper.')

The spider usually lays a large number of eggs which she wraps in a ball of closely woven silk. This ball may be deposited in the end of her silk house, or fastened somewhere near or hidden in the ground. Spider mothers show great affection

for this egg case. The spider will carry the ball about with her, recover it if it is taken from her, carry it up steep and difficult places, search widely for it if it is lost. When the eggs are hatched, dozens of tiny spiders eat their way through the silk ball, and frequently betake themselves to the back of their mother where they remain crowded together for days. The mother feeds them by preparing the bodies of insects which she has caught and handing them up to the little ones, who suck them dry of juice.

Little spiders moult, or cast their skins, as they grow; the dry skin falls or is pulled off like a husk. With every moult the size is increased and the skin becomes a trifle tougher. Some little spiders spin tiny lines which they stretch across the body of their mother, and then seizing these lines they wriggle and jerk themselves out of their skins, leaving the dry cast-off skins hanging upon the line so that mamma spider's back looks like a miniature clothes-yard, such quantities of fairy linen hung on the lines to dry

Spiders have often been tamed and taught to come and eat from one's hand. A few months or a year represent a spider's life lease, but some have been known, in favorable circumstances, to live three or four years and reach a great size.

There are many varieties of spiders. Water spiders, trap-door spiders, tower spiders; garden spiders are common and widely differing varieties, all well worthy of study, and no doubt all of them waiting for attentive observation to discover new and curious traits and fashions which have not yet been made known to the world.

'Serving the King.'

(A. Eva Richardson in 'Children's Friend.')

It was the first snow of the year. Already every bush and tree looked white, and the dingy London gardens had for the time being become beautiful, adorned with the feathery snowflakes. Etta looked out of the nursery window, and hoped each moment the storm would cease; but at last, her eyes aching with the glare of whiteness, she laid her face against the window and burst into tears.

'It's no use,' she sobbed, 'no use at all. I try to be good and do what I ought, and then if ever I look forward to any treat it's sure to be spoilt. It's always the way, and I shan't try any more.'

'Etta, my house won't stand up. Come and put it wight, please,' called little Charlie from across the room.

'Oh, do be quiet, Charlie; I can't be always playing with a baby,' and she stamped her foot angrily.

'There, Miss Etta, I never did see such a contrary girl; now you've made the poor dear cry, and you know how bad his cough is,' cried nurse. 'Now, ducky, let nurse put it right.'

'It's just like you, nurse, always taking his part, and never mine. It's much worse for me to lose my party, and not be able to wear my new frock either. I do think you are unfair—everybody is—nobody loves me.'

'Well, miss, I'm sure it's your own fault if they don't, when you're that ill-tempered whenever anything don't just please you. You ain't a bit like your ma, so kind and patient as she is.'

Etta laid her head down on the window-seat, and cried quietly. Her throat hurt her, and her head was aching so badly; and yet nobody seemed to know anything about it, or mind how unhappy she was. Presently the sound of nurse's voice died away, and for a time all was silent. After a while she heard a very slight rustle, and a withered leaf fell from the tree just outside. It lay on the snow by the window-pane, and Etta heard it give a sigh that seemed strange. 'I'll listen,' thought she.

Then came a little clear voice, 'What is the matter, big brown leaf—why do you sigh?' and there was a snowflake sitting just on the edge of the leaf.

'Is that you, little white thing? What are you?' The leaf was rustling again.

'Oh, I'm a happy little snowflake, sent here by the king. It's so nice to be useful.'

'Yes,' sighed the leaf. 'I was useful once; but now I'm old and withered up, and I'm no use to anybody. Nobody wants me.'

Etta raised her head. Why, the leaf was saying just what she had said. She wondered what reply the snowflake would make.

'No,' came in a little voice, 'don't say that, big brown leaf. You grew on the tree when the king told you, and helped to make a soft green shade all the year, and now you are going to sleep on the brown earth, when we are melted away. You must be very happy really, to think you have served the king so long.'

The leaf was silent for a moment, and then said, 'I never thought of that. We all grew together in the spring, and covered the tree all summer, and then the others began to go, and I felt unhappy because I was alone. But now you tell me the king wanted me there I don't mind at all. How good of him to use me!'

'Yes, and me,' answered the snowflake. 'To think the king should notice such a tiny thing as I am, and send me down to make his earth look beautiful, and help to keep it safe from the frost.'

'In that window,' remarked the leaf, 'a little girl lives. She belongs to the king, and could serve him so much, so very much more than we can; but she never wants to, or tries to. I wonder what he thinks of her all the year!'

The snowflake thought a little, then answered,

'I think he loves her, and is sorry; but, O big brown leaf, I'm sure if she only thought, she would never wish to grieve the king. It must be so very, very sad to live and not feel one is serving him. Poor little girl.'

'Oh, I'll serve him,' cried Etta. 'I never thought about it before like that.'

'Hush, darling, what is the matter?' And there was mamma, with her sweet face bent down to Etta's, and her cool hand on the burning forehead.

'I'm afraid you are not very well, my girlie; come away from the window with me.'

Etta looked to see Big Brown Leaf and little Snowflake. But the leaf was covered by the soft, white snow which was still falling, and she could not see any sign of the little talking snowflake.

'Mamma, was I asleep? Could it have been a dream?—it was so real.'

'Yes, my pet, you were fast asleep when I found you, and talking away to somebody. Come and lie on the sofa ad tell me about it. I'm afraid my little Etta's cold is quite as bad as Charlie's.'

And then Etta put her hand in her mother's, and told her all that had passed.

'I know the king is Jesus, mamma, and I should so like to serve him. Oh, mamma, I am nearly nine and I've done nothing for the king yet,'—and tears rolled down Etta's cheeks, not tears of temper like those she shed an hour ago. This time her guardian angel smiled, and flew up to the throne to tell the king that another little soldier was ready for his service.

And Etta knelt and asked to be taught how to love and serve the king on earth, that one day she might go to him in heaven.

Take it to the Lord in Prayer.

(Rev. E. Payson Hammond in 'The Christian's Guide.')

A friend from Canada has sent me the following story. She says, little Jesse was in trouble, and her blue eyes were full of tears when she came to tell me her grief.

'Miss C—, I've lost the stocking I had finished and now this one, nearly done, will be of no use, and I wanted to give them to grandma on Saturday, her birthday.' The tearful face was hidden in her apron, for it was a great trouble to the little girl, as she meant to surprise her grandmother with a gift of her own making.

With a few comforting words, I sent someone to help in the search for the missing stocking, but they looked in vain, and Jesse sat down to have another cry over her loss, and did little else till school was over, taking home a heavy heart and sad face, and bringing both back next morning.

The Scripture reading that morning was about John in prison, and how he was beheaded, and his friends took up his body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. After reading came the lessons, and then most of the scholars went out to play. I was busy at my desk when little Jesse again stood before me, her face all smiles.

'O, Miss C—, I have found my stocking.'

'That is good news, dear, tell me how you found it.'

'Why, you know you read about "telling Jesus," and I thought I'd tell him about my stocking: so I did, and asked him to let me find it, and when recess came I went to look through the desks once more, and in the first desk I looked, the very first, I found it. Wasn't it kind of him to let me find it so soon?'

Years after Jesse with much feeling referred to this incident in her childhood, when she had learned the reality of taking everything to Jesus, a lesson she never forgot.

Nothing Lost.

Throw a pebble in the stream,
  See the circle growing,
Broken by the rocks and stones—
Broken, yes, but reaching out
  Far beyond our knowing.

Cast a smile upon the world,
  Warm some heart to glowing,
Chilled by scorn and evil thoughts
Chilled, but shining ever on,
  Joy and peace bestowing.

Breathe a word upon the air,
  Helpful, kind and loving;
Faint and small the voice may be
Faint, but wafted on for good,
  Moving, onward moving.

Do a kindly deed each day,
  Someone's load to lighten,
Weak, unknown save but to few,
But the impulse spreading on
  All the world will brighten.

—'Silver Link.'

Joe's Last Drink.

A TRUE STORY.

'When the men stop at the "Chequers" and give you a sip out of their mugs, do say you won't have any, Bob,' pleaded a younger boy earnestly. 'Maybe they'll jeer and call you a fool, but do be firm. It can't ever do you anything but harm if you get to like it. You wouldn't want persuading if you had seen what I have!'

'What have you seen, Jem, then, that makes you so mighty particular?'

'I'll tell you, lad;' and the two boys sat by the roadside waiting for their master, who was to meet them at a certain spot.

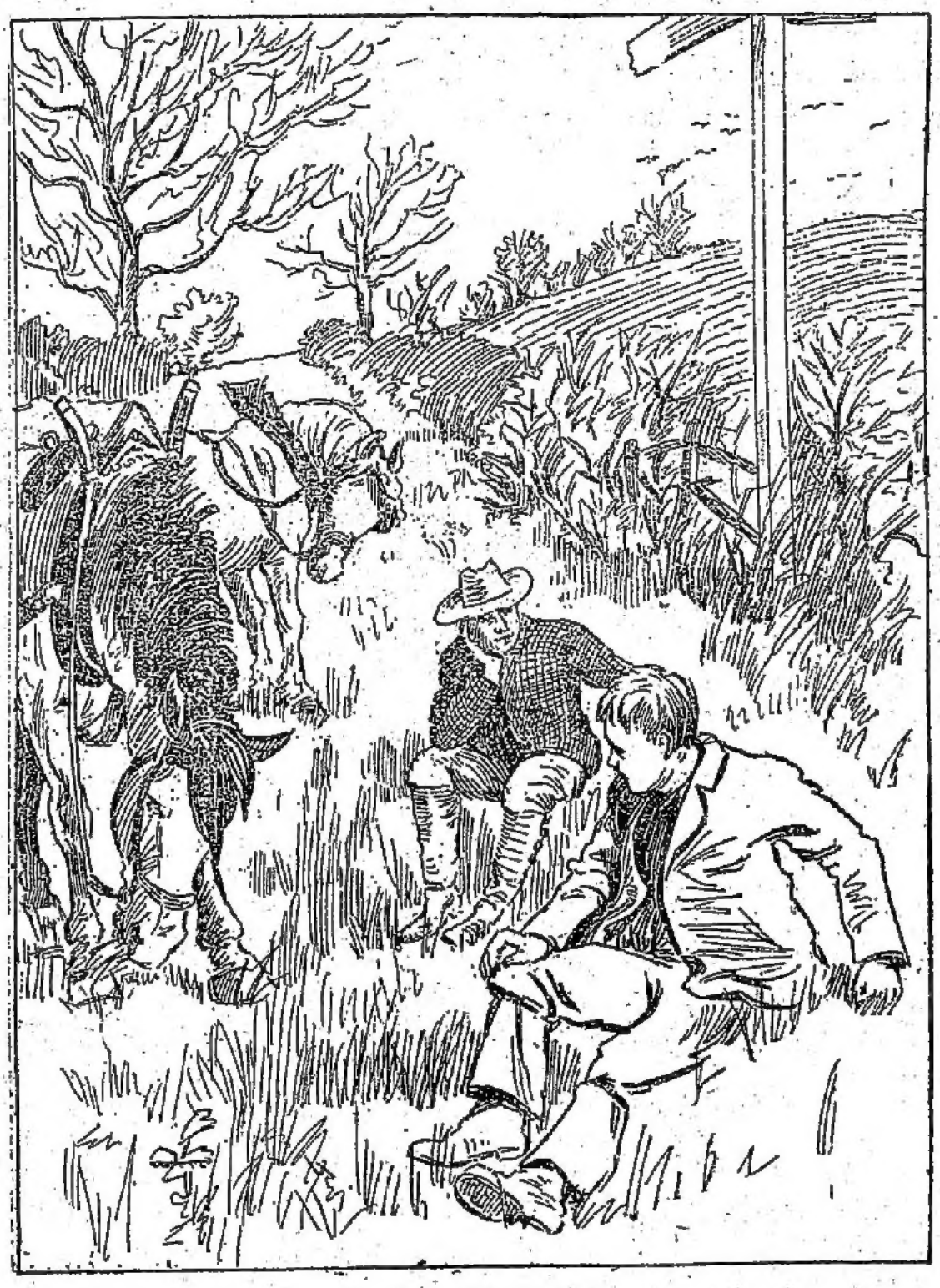
'Last year I was hired out over the Wash. Tubb's farm is miles away from any village, or house either. When we had to go to the station it was rare news for us boys, for it was a bit of a change, and I thought myself very lucky one night when my master bade me be up early, ready to start with a load of corn to send to London. That meant several hours at least in the nearest village. Joe Watson was in charge of the horses, a good-natured, pleasant young fellow, with but one fault, rather "fond of a drop," as I heard the others say.

'"Be steady, Joe," called out master as we started, "and don't stop anywhere; I want you home early, mind." "Right you are, Master," called back Joe, cheerily, "I sha'n't stop anywhere this journey;" and I am sure he meant it. But when we drew near the village Joe called at the Rising Sun for some beer, and gave me a drink out of his mug. Then when we got to the station the Traveller's Rest was hard by, and Joe had another drink there, and once or twice he ran in while we were unloading. He was a pleasant chap, and first one took him in and then another, and every time he came back to the waggon his face was redder and his eyes wilder, and I could see the drink was beginning to tell upon him. When our waggon was empty and reloaded with coal, ready to go back, Joe was just running off to the Traveller's Rest again for a parting glass, when I begged him not, for I had sense enough to see he would get into trouble. He swore an oath, and made a cut at me with his long whip, and I never said another word after that, for it broke my heart—who had never had an unkind word, nor heard him say a bad thing before. So I just left him alone, and when he came out at last, noisy and unsteady, I went to the leader's head and began the return journey with a heavy heart. Just as we left the village, Joe turned into the Rising Sun, as he had turned in as we entered it, and left me standing in the road, feeling angry and miserable. The horses knew their heads were homewards, and they were growing restless, and it was all I could do to keep our great Daisy steady. She had a foal at home and was right-down unsteady. At last Joe appeared, and something seemed to have vexed him, for he came unsteadily towards me and seized Daisy's rein out of my hand. I don't think he rightly knew what he was doing, and the mare, she was frightened at him and gave a jump sideways and pulled Joe down. I never shall know exactly what happened, but in an instant he lay all his length under her feet, and she started off, and the waggon, with its great weight of coal, passing right over Joe's body! There was plenty of help at hand, and Joe was soon lifted up; kind women came running out of their houses, and one held his head on her knee, while another bathed his face, but our poor Joe was quite dead—dead in an instant, drunk when he died!

'I have taken the pledge, Bob, since that day,' continued the younger boy, 'and, please God, I'll keep it!'

'I won't have any more drops with the men, Jem,' said the other presently, 'and I don't know but what I'll sign too.'

This is a true story, and it is not a year since poor Joe died a victim of the Demon Drink.



JOE'S LAST DRINK.

Plain Words To Clergymen.

In letters to the 'Temperance Chronicle' on apathy, the Rev. Seymer E. Terry, M.A., of Brighton, writes:—'It seems to me that if a clergyman will not become a total abstainer . . . . the least he can do is to hold his tongue about his so-called moderation, and not belittle the cause of total abstinence. . . . From the ranks of moderate drinkers come our 600,000 drunkards; from the moderation pleaders come our poor fallen clerical brethren, who bring scorn upon the name and profession of Christianity, and the direct misery upon their own heads, and this they would have escaped had they taken the safe course of total abstinence. . . . By his example as a moderate drinker a clergyman may influence some to start on the road of moderation who will finish their career as drunkards, but by his example of total abstinence he may save them from such perdition.' He concludes a letter last week by saying: 'I would rather follow the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, himself a total abstainer, said: "I do ask you to give it up for the sake of Christ and for the sake of Christ's people."'

How the Saloon Helps Business.

At Hamilton, Ohio, one pay-day, says an American paper, a student of social phenomena witnessed a transaction of very great significance, which shows how the saloon helps business. As the employees approached the cashier's desk, he observed that one of them was accompanied by the collector of a saloon, to whom he authorized the cashier to pay the amount due, according to the bill. The cashier obeyed instructions—paid to the collector the amount of his claim, and the employee the balance of his wages for that week. After the saloonkeeper's claim had been met, the workingman received five cents. Our 'student,' curious to know more of his life, went to his home, and learned that his wife was then engaged upon the third washing for that week.—Selected.

A Bottle and a Well.

(Genesis xxi., 14-19.)

Man gave her a bottle of water; God opened
her eyes to see
A well in the wilderness flowing, clear,
full and free:
Man's gift was so insufficient 'twas spent,
and she was distressed;
God's gift, like Himself unfailing, was
enough, and she was blest.

Are you dwelling beside the fountain? If so,
you are well supplied,
While many with empty bottles, are thirsting, and parched, and dried:
If you're dwelling beside the fountain, your
leaf will be always green;,
And the fruit you bear will be luscious, and
much to God's glory seen.

Our Lord is a well of water, that springeth
for evermore;
You can never exhaust His fulness; just
take Him and thirst no more.
With joy from the wells of salvation draw
water each day and hour;
And your life shall acquire new sweetness,
new beauty, new peace, new power.

Oh! Lord, for the opened vision and the gift
of the desert well,
We gratefully, humbly thank Thee: with
praises we fain would tell,
That the souls around who are dying may
come to the well and live;
May drink of unfailing waters, which only
God's love can give.

—'Springing Well.'

LESSON IV.—JAN. 22.

Christ and Nicodemus.

John iii., 1-16. Study verses 1-21. Memory verses, 14-16. Compare II. Cor. v., 17-21.

Home Readings

M. John iii., 1-13.—Christ and Nicodemus.
T. John iii., 14-21.—Christ and Nicodemus.
W. II. Cor. v., 14-21.—A new creature.
T. I. Peter i., 15-25.—Born again.
F. Num. xxi., 4-9.—The brazen serpent.
S. I. John iv., 7-14.—The love of God.
S. Rom. viii., 31-39.—Mighty love.

Golden Text.

'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'—John iii., 16.

Lesson Story.

Jesus and his disciples left Cana soon after the first miracle there, and visited Capernaum for a few days. After this they went up to Jerusalem, where Jesus cleansed the temple of those who were making it a 'den of thieves.' This was about the time of the Passover, April, A.D. 27.

While our Lord was in Jerusalem, one night there came to him a ruler and teacher of the Jews, a Pharisee named Nicodemus. Nicodemus addressed Jesus with great respect and reverence, saying that he knew by his wondrous works that he must be sent from God. Our Saviour read his thoughts and questionings and replied, 'Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' This answer greatly puzzled Nicodemus, who inquired how a man could be born again; surely a man could not become a little baby again, and yet the regeneration of his heart and mind would be really a far greater miracle. But Jesus again explained to him that unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit of God, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Then was Nicodemus astonished and perplexed, but our Saviour bade him not to marvel or disbelieve that a man must be born anew (or, born from above) before entering the kingdom of God, for as they heard the wind blowing and could not tell whence it came nor whither it went, so they could see the work of the Spirit of God in men, though men could not tell how he works. 'How can these things be?' queried Nicodemus. Then Jesus, with great patience and loving kindness, explained to him that these were things that Nicodemus, as the teacher of Israel, ought to know and understand. For, as when the children of Israel were dying in the wilderness from the deadly serpent's sting (Num. xxi., 6-9), God commanded Moses to make a brazen serpent and put it on a high pole that all who saw it might live, so now the Son of Man must be lifted up on the cross that whosoever looketh and believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The Bible Class

'Born again.'—I. Pet. i., 22, 23; I. John iii., 9-11; iv., 7; v., 1, 4, 18-20; Titus iii., 5; Gal. vi., 15; Jas. i., 18.

'The kingdom of God.'—Mark i., 15; x., 14, 24; xii., 34; Matt. vi., 33; Luke vi., 20; ix., 60; xiv., 15; xviii., 29; John xviii., 36; Acts xiv., 22; Rom. xiv., 7.

'Water.'—John i., 26; iv., 10, 14; vii., 38; Eph. v., 26; Heb. ix., 19; I. John v., 6, 8; Rev. vii., 17; Psa. xxiii., 2.

'Whosoever.'—Mark viii., 34; Matt. x., 32, 33; xii., 50; Luke xiv., 11; John viii., 34; xi., 26; Rom. x., 13; I. John ii., 23; Rev. xx., 15.

Suggestions.

The famous preacher Spurgeon, whose eloquent upholding of the pure gospel has won so many thousand souls to Christ, dates his conversion from the day when he listened as a very young man to a sermon on the text 'Look unto me, and be ye saved' (Isa. xlv., 22). The speaker had not very much to say, so he wisely repeated his text over and over, and finally applied it personally to young Spurgeon. The young man was much surprised, but as the speaker called out to him to look to Jesus, he did look, and that look saved his soul and made him into a new man.

We need to be so careful to lift up Jesus in all our speaking and teaching, otherwise our hearers will not be saved. It would have been of no use for Moses to draw attention to himself, good as he was, if the people would not look at the brazen serpent—there was no other power to save them. And if people to-day will not look to Christ for salvation, there is no other power to help them (Acts iv., 12).

Nicodemus came by night, perhaps because he was busy all day, and then he would expect to find Jesus alone at night, and so have a better opportunity to learn of him. Our Lord was probably staying in the guest-room or 'upper-chamber' of some friend's house. These upper rooms were entered by an outside stairway, so that the guest and his friends might go in and out without disturbing the family. As they sat talking together, the king of the Jews and a teacher of the Jews, they heard perhaps the sighing of the wind in the trees, and our Lord, never at a loss for an illustration, used that which would at once appeal to Nicodemus as most fitting—the mystery of the wind and the sacred mystery of birth.

Nicodemus either at once or shortly after this became a disciple of Jesus (John vii., 50-52; xix., 39).

John iii., 16, has been called the 'Bible in miniature.' Luther called it 'The Little Gospel,' because it contains the message of the gospel in such a few words.

Questions.

1. Why did Nicodemus go to see Jesus?
2. Did he ever become a disciple?
3. What did Jesus say was necessary before anyone could enter the kingdom of God?
4. To what did Jesus liken himself?

Practical Points.

(By A. H. Cameron.)

Knowing about Jesus is not saving faith (verses 1, 2). The new birth is the greatest miracle in the universe, yet a little child may experience it (verses 3, 5). 'Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his works in vain' (verse 4). The mystery of the new birth is no greater than the love that lies back of it (verses 6-8 and 16). Only the eye of faith can see the deep things of God (verses 9, 10). None are so deaf to the voice of God as they whose hearts are steeped in the love of the world (verses 11, 12). Life for a look—but we must look in the right direction. All other ways are death (verses 13-15).

Tiverton, Ont.

C. E Topic.

Jan. 22.—A student's prayer.—Ps. xix., 1-14. (A meeting for the Day of Prayer for Colleges.)

Junior C. E.

Jan. 22.—Speak boldly for God; why? when?—Ex. iv., 19-15.

Notice.

The Montreal Bible House asks us to announce that they have no more of the little Gospels according to St. John, as there has been such a demand for them from the 'Messenger' readers.

'Those Boys.'

The experimental teacher found soon that those boys were not so wicked as they were 'lively,' and that her only safeguard lay in keeping them actively employed every minute.

They would not listen to a lesson passively, but if set to work it out for themselves with pencil, paper, or blackboard, to write or print lists of names and places in the lesson, to draw free-hand pictures of lesson-scenes or maps, or if allowed to pass pencils, papers, and to arrange chairs, or even to memorize texts as quickly as possible, they really behaved well and learned something.

The trouble was that they were all so quick and bright that they would finish their tasks at short notice, and it was sometimes a problem to find work enough to keep them busy. The more ambitious members were sometimes dissatisfied with their first attempts at writing or drawing, and tried it over again, spurring on the others to do likewise by their severe criticisms of each other's work.

The teacher felt genuine sympathy and affection for those boys, and they knew it intuitively, and it had this effect: they kept each other in order, being critical after a time of rude manners; so critical that they were quite eager to use their fists upon each other to preserve a respectful attention to 'teacher.'

This class was not reformed in one week nor in two, and the natures of these boys were not changed at all, neither were they suppressed or repressed into good behaviour.

They are not patient listeners to this day; but give them plenty to do, to work out or to study out for themselves and they are ambitious to do it well. Though they are somewhat noisy while at work, their noise is expressive of enthusiasm; but they really behave well while actively employed.

Now that they are willing and glad to work, the next step in advance will be to make them willing to listen and act upon what they hear.—Julia E. Peck, in 'Sunday-School Banner.'

The Scrap-Book.

Every teacher should have a scrap-book. For what? So as to preserve the serviceable items which daily come before his eye. The great need of teachers is illustration, and yet they let thousands of illustrations slip by them without ever making an effort to lay hold upon them. A scrap-book is an eye-opener. As you scan the columns of the daily paper or are reading a magazine or a book, you will see things for the scrap-book which, without it, you would not think of preserving. Illustrations, facts, stories, methods, etc., will rapidly accumulate. For some time one may not find in his scrap-book anything which he can use upon the current lessons, but after a while it will contain so much, and of such wide variety that he will scarcely ever turn to it in vain.

It is hardly necessary to say that the scrap-book should be alphabetized, in order that its contents may be classified. It is useless to paste things in just as they happen along, unless they be indexed; and that is considerable trouble. Better have all the clippings upon one topic together, so that they can be all glanced over at the same time. Bishop Cheney, of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Chicago, is remarkable in his discourses for the number and aptness of his illustrations. He is a scrap-book man. —'Pilgrim Teacher.'

The Teacher's Mistake.

Some make the mistake of presuming they have all the grace they need. They say complacently to themselves: 'Now, as to religion, I have that to begin with.' So they are concerned only to read up, to inform themselves. Long ago they 'got religion,' now they must get knowledge; they are good enough, but do not know enough. So they think. What a dangerous mistake! Growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ must advance together if they really advance at all. The one conditions and limits the other. You might grow into other branches of human knowledge without it materially affecting your character. You might know all about mathematics, and not be the better for it. Many of the worst criminals have been proficient in higher mathematics. You can go deeper into the mysteries of science and philosophy, and be going deeper into sin at the same time. But that knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus can be increased only as you grow in grace. Otherwise it will be only a thing of the head. It will be cold and sterile, and fall of its high and holy purpose.—Rev. J. B. Kanaga.

There are some who excuse themselves from laboring in the Sunday-school on the plea that Sunday is a day of rest. But a change of occupation is a rest. Lolling all day on Sunday, gives the body a rest, but tires the mind. The most unrefreshed men on Monday are those who spend the Sabbath in eating, reclining in a hammock, and sleeping. The Sunday-school furnishes an admirable opportunity to quicken and refresh the mind without exhausting the body. There is no case we have heard of where one has died from this kind of Sunday labor. If there has been, we should say with the negro preacher, 'Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord.—'Pilgrim Teacher.'

HOUSEHOLD.

False Economy.

Some women entertain curious ideas of what constitutes economy. A fragile little housewife saves seventy-five cents each week because she cannot afford to hire some one to do her ironing. But she never hesitates to pay a dollar a pair for stockings, or two dollars for a pair of gloves, or three for the doctor's visit occasioned by overtaxing her strength. Another considers fruit a luxury beyond the reach of the family purse, but she has no scruple whatever in buying new material for the dress which she has worn only a few months, and employing a dressmaker to alter it with the present fashion. We recall a dear woman, the delicate mother of six active children, who would not save her strength by using a carpet sweeper because, she said, 'they do wear out the carpets so.' But the habit of what she called economy wore her out long before the carpets, and the motherless children have the things mother saved instead of her precious self.—American Paper.

Chicken Culture.

Probably what fowls suffer most for at the hands of careless owners, is water. Most of all they enjoy a stream of running water, but as this is seldom available when in confinement, they should be carefully watered several times a day. If this is impracticable have a deep dish partly filled with clean sand and then filled brim-full with water. This keeps the water pure and the dish need not be filled so often, provided it is always kept full enough for them to reach down to it and get a full draught. This is an absolute necessity for them, and to neglect it when they cannot get out to help themselves, is criminal.

Their food must be varied. Here comes in the economic plan. Almost every family has a certain quantity of refuse from the kitchen table. Nothing is better than the meat scraps that are only fit to throw away, and fowls are adepts in picking a bone. And now I shall give a recipe for a loaf for them which one little girl has been known to call 'the chickens' fruit cake.'

How often the potato peelings are thrown out to rot, or burned up in the stove, making a most offensive odor. Take the potato peelings which the dinner process leaves on your hands, boil them for twenty minutes over a quick fire, and then set them aside until after you are through dinner. Then, whatever scraps you have left of vegetables from the plates, beans, peas, tomatoes, in fact, anything—along with bits of stale bread and left over desserts that cannot be made use of again throw all these into the dish in which you have cooked potato peelings, then add two quarts of lukewarm water and a spoonful or two of yeast (the old-fashioned 'emptyin's' that our mothers used are very serviceable here, but even 'store yeast' will do), and now thicken with Indian meal and let rise a few hours and bake. You will have (for them) a palatable loaf of a fine brown tint which looks very much like a large fruit cake, and your fowls are ravenous for it. It has taken a little work, to be sure, but it has been made of material that would nearly all have been thrown away. The advantage is that it cannot grow stale or sour. One meal a day of this, and another full meal of cracked corn, wheat or buckwheat, oats, or a few handfuls of broken rice, and so far as food is concerned, your fowls will be well taken care of. They must also have access to a dish of lime and cracked oyster shells, for the formation of the egg shell. It is well to throw the seeds during some parts of the day on a clean floor over which hay or grass has been plentifully thrown. This gives them the exercise they need, for it is their nature to scratch for their food, and thus get it more slowly. The pan of gravel, or coarse sand, must not be forgotten in this 'outfit.'

They must also have plenty of grass during laying time, and radish or dandelion leaves, burdock or horseradish—in short, almost any green thing. It is also a necessity to let them change their habitat now and then. A good plan is to have a little runway two feet wide and two feet high, covered with wire netting, leading into an open space, also covered with coarse wire netting, but high enough to admit of a man, who should spade up the whole enclosure. Here they may come in contact with the fresh earth, and feel as if they were in a new world. The little passage-way, or tunnel, seems to give the excitement of the chase as they pass from it into the larger enclosure. If such an arrangement is not practicable, let them go out of the coop about nightfall, and run about in some glassy place for a few minutes, as we may not know all their needs, and in this way they can forage for themselves. They never wander far at nightfall, and soon go back of their own accord to their roosts. I have known a flock of fifty stay up, and wide awake, until almost dark, to get this one little run, and on rushing out as soon as their door was opened, run over the lawn to where the apple blossoms strewed the ground, and pick and eat them as if they had found their manna. Think what delicious food, and if good food makes a difference in the quality of the eggs, as some hold that it does, surely such food ought to have the premium. Of course our remarks apply only to the poor creatures which have not their freedom. Those people who have great barns and wide fields may be able to let them shift for themselves. One thing still we had almost forgotten. A large box of fine sand for their bath. If this is impracticable, take the fine sifted coal ashes, with a spoonful of sulphur mixed through it, and they will bathe in this box of ashes for hours together, and in this way keep themselves free from vermin. If anyone would follow these few simple suggestions, he may have all the fresh eggs he can use the year round, and never feel the expense which debars so many from this pleasant pastime.—'Christian Work.'

Tip-Top Cake.

'Norah, I have a holiday this afternoon, and if you don't object, I'd like to bake a cake. I've got a lovely recipe grandma gave me,' and Marjorie peered anxiously into Norah's face as she spoke.

'Sure, and you're welcome to make all the cake you like, and the oven's that fine for cooking that I was just a wishing I had time to make one myself.'

'Oh, I thank you, Norah, ever so much,' cried Marjorie, tying on the gingham apron Norah handed her.

'Now, let me see what I must do first,' she continued, wiping out the yellow bowl in which she always mixed her cakes. 'Cream, one cupful of sugar and one cupful of butter. The only thing I don't like about making cake is creaming the butter and sugar. It's such hard work,' and Marjorie sighed as she wielded the wooden spoon with all her strength. 'Do you know, Norah, that numbers of people use an iron spoon when they mix cake; but I never do, because grandma says it is apt to discolor it. Now, I must beat the whites of three eggs. I don't need the yolks, so I'll make a nice mayonnaise for the salad.'

When the whites of the eggs were sufficiently beaten, Marjorie added them to the butter and sugar.

'One cupful of milk,' she read from her recipe book. 'Grandma says the best method to follow in making cake is to use only half the milk first, and when this is well mixed, to add half the flour. The recipe says two cupfuls of flour and two teaspoonsful of baking powder, so I'll do as grandma says, and use half first.'

As she spoke, Marjorie busied herself sifting the flour and mixing the baking powder with it, and then adding it to the other things, she beat the cake with all her strength.

'You greased the pan for me? Thank you, Norah,' and Marjorie proceeded to turn the cake into the deep square pan that stood on the table.

'The fire's just right,' she said, opening the oven door and pushing the pan in, 'so I won't need to look at the cake until it is baked, and that will be in exactly half an hour. I can be making the mayonnaise during that time.'

In exactly half an hour by the clock Marjorie opened the oven door, and found the cake had risen and was of a beautiful golden brown color.

'I'll try it with a broom straw,' she said, 'and if no dough sticks to the straw, then it's safe to consider it baked.'

'It's all right,' she cried triumphantly, and taking it from the oven, she turned it carefully from the pan upon a toast rack to let it cool before cutting it.

'What kind of a cake do you call this, Norah?' asked papa, as he helped himself to his third slice. 'I don't remember ever having it before.'

'You must ask Miss Marjorie, sir, she made it.'

'Grandma did tell me the name, papa, but I forgot it, so I really don't know what it's called.'

'I don't care what its name is,' said Jack; 'I call it tip-top.—New York 'Observer.'

Selected Recipes.

Beef Sausage—Take three pounds of fresh, lean beef, and one pound of fat beef, chopped fine at the butcher shop when purchased, season with three teaspoonfuls of powdered sage, three of salt, a pinch of red pepper, one half-teaspoonful of black pepper, a piece of butter the size of an egg. Mix this thoroughly through the meat. Press in a small crock, set in a cold place. It is better for standing a day before using. By straining lard over the crock it will keep two or three weeks. Make a larger quantity when desiring to keep it.

Creamed Potatoes—Scrape new potatoes, put into a saucepan, cover with water, add a little salt, and let boil until tender; drain off the water, sprinkle over a tablespoonful of flour, and pour in a teacupful of cream; stir, take up, dust with pepper, and serve.

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